June 26, 1969

MIDDLE EAST

"CHANGES IN AN INDIAN VILLAGE"

by McKim Marriott of the University of Chicago. This is the transcript of the talk that Ambassador Bowles recommended to you.

Marriott discusses the changes since 1951 in a fairly isolated north Indian village. Although economic development has been important, more significant has been the change from the villagers' passive acceptance of their lot to their taking the initiative in the process of change.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

June 20, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HENRY A. KISSINGER
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: "Changes in an Indian Village," about which Ambassador Bowles spoke to the President

During his call on June 13, Ambassador Chester Bowles called to the attention of President Nixon a study of an Indian village by Professor McKim Marriott of the University of Chicago. President Nixon said he would like to read it. Enclosed are a summary of that study and a copy of the paper itself.

Dick Pedersen for
John P. Walsh
Acting Executive Secretary

Enclosures:

1. Summary of Professor Marriott's paper

2. Paper

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Summary of a Paper, "Changes in an Indian Village"

by Professor McKim Marriott of the University of Chicago

This paper is a study of an Indian village and the changes that took place in it over a period of 17 years. Professor Marriott first went to "his" village in 1951. The village is in Uttar Pradesh, a state east of New Delhi. Marriott found it a conservative place, isolated, with the nearest town 14 miles away and the nearest paved road six miles away.

In 1951 the village had 850 people. Water was inadequate and the wells were 30 to 40 feet deep. Without electricity it was raised in leather buckets using the energy of men and bullocks. It was slow hard work to irrigate even a small holding.

The people ate badly--two times a day, bread, grains, carrots and fodder. They talked about how they were not getting enough to eat. Everything was used--leaves were cut off the trees and fed to the animals.

The government had better seeds but the terms were bad and the farmers said they couldn't use them, that they couldn't grind the grain with their stone mills, that they didn't like the taste, etc.

In 1951, 20 people out of the 850 in the village had gone as far as the fifth grade. About 10% of the village left it in one generation because of a lack of jobs.

In 1968, Professor Marriott went back to his village.

He found that in 1961 the government put in a tube well with an electric pump. It was very successful. The next year a power line for private wells was put in. Ten wells have been drilled since. Each represents an investment of between $1000 to $1500 (in rupees). They were put in by private farmers using credit from the local land bank.

1962 saw one other change in the village. A farmer moved into the village who had never lived there before. Backed by his landlord family in a nearby village he bought 10

acres in Professor Marriott's village. The new farmer had experience with the new seeds and fertilizers. He used them on his new farm and they were successful. The next year eight or ten other farmers tried them and were also successful. In 1964 every farmer in the village was trying the new techniques.

Production has gone up ever since. Farmers in the village are receiving two to three times what they were getting in 1951.

The first thing the people did with their money was to build five new temples. They also improved their houses--mud is being replaced by brick and stone. People are also eating better--three times a day instead of two and the diet is more balanced--particularly with more vegetables.

The new economy has brought increased employment. With water available in quantity all year round, fields are never vacant. The demand for labor has meant that people stay in the village and in fact the village imports labor. It now has 40% more people than it had in 1951.

Politically the village has changed. The farmer who started the changes is now head man of the village. Elections are hotly contested. The main issues, which weren't even thought of 16 years ago, concern schools, improved roads, and street lighting.

Schooling has gone up. Sixteen years ago only 5% of the children were educated. Now about 50% are going to school.

As a whole, the people have changed. No longer passive, waiting to be told, they now offer suggestions and go after solutions.

CHANGES IN AN INDIAN VILLAGE

Talk by Professor McKim Marriott, University of Chicago [illegible], in New Delhi, Dec. 19, 1968

I am speaking to you about a small bit of evidence which happens to be interesting to me because I am a social anthropologist. I went in 1950 to Aligarh District to study a village which would be about as conservative a place as I could fine in U. P. -- in western U. P. It's 100 miles from where I was working. I thought that I would hope to learn from you something -- perhaps a little about the history of this area.

Some of you may be better acquainted with the larger picture than I am, and I hope I may discover from you some questions about things that I should be looking for, as I am now back in that village for six months. I have been there for six weeks so far and I have another three months to spend there. You may have some suggestions about things that I should expect to find there in the way of changes since 1950-52, when I was previously there. And you may have some ideas about what makes this sort of thing happen that has happened in this particular village.

This was a very conservative place. I chose it because it was as far as I could get from a paved road, or railway station, or city. It is 14 miles from the nearest town -- Aligarh city -- 14 miles South of Aligarh. It was six miles from any road -- and still is six miles from any road. It was then also a very conservative place.

The ....

The technology of the village when I first arrivered there -- actually spring of 1951 -- was mostly based on barley and field peas, gram, some oilseed crops; it was unimproved basic wheat, and the yield was by our standards poor. The villagers thought they were doing quite well, however; they thought they had very good land. They did have a shortage of water. The water was 30 feet down in the ground, if not 40 as it was in some places. They could get the water up to their crops only by lowering leather buckets and raising them again by the labor of several men and bullocks to lift those very heavy buckets. And very slow work it was, to irrigate the average holding.

The average landholding was fairly small, around nine or ten acres. And there were about 850 people in the village then. There were 35 or 40 principal tenants in the village. It was a landlord village at the time. Most of the farmers in the village were Brahmin by caste.

The people were not getting very much food. They were always talking about how they were not getting enough food to eat. This was in 1951. They ate twice a day. They had roti, bread, grain food. In the morning they would eat carrots in the field, and some of the fodder crops they would nibble at, and have a little buttermilk if they had milk in the house.

About a third of the crops were sold outside for cash -- grain crops. Prices were rising at that time, and landlord tenures were being abolished, in the year I was there, with a great deal of official pressure. That is, the administrators of the province, the collectors and assistant collectors, etc., were coming in and demanding that the tenants pay 10 times their annual rent in order to buy out the landlord and become permanent owners with transferable rights. The tenants did not want to pay 10 times their rent, and were threatened by all sorts of court proceedings to pay that money, and even so most of them ultimately did.

People felt very dependent on government officials, worried about them, concerned about what government might do to them. In 1952, after looking at the technology of the village, I wrote the paper in which I said I thought there was a very narrow margin for

realizing....

realizing the changes that were being proposed. There were, of course, some ideas about community development in 1952. These ideas were getting started. The Ford Foundation came in at that time and Ensminger threw some ideas around. A power project had been begun, and there were suggestions about improved practices. But it seemed to me that what we had in 1950-52 there was a kind of overdeveloped situation in which there just wasn't any margin.

I say overdeveloped rather than underdeveloped because everything was being used to the utmost. If you went to the village in the hot weather in the month of May, you would find every blade of grass dug up by the roots and fed to the animals because fodder was so scarce. You would find just a few fodder crops standing at that time, because the farmers were still busy threshing their crops from the winter harvest. It took a long time to do the threshing, and they didn't have the bullocks to raise water for much that might have grown in the hot weather.

Everything was very scarce. The leaves were cut off trees and fed to the animals as fodder. Every last calorie seemed to be extracted from the environment, and the manure, of course, was being used in the fields when it could be. I say "of course" because there was a belief that farmers in the Ganges valley generally didn't know about the value of things like manure. The farmers did know about it. It was just that it was necessary to burn a good part of it as fuel, because there was no other source of fuel.

There had been seeds around in government seed stores for some time. It seemed to me that their objections to using the seeds were quite reasonable, because the terms of credit were very difficult. They had to repay in kind on the date required, or else they suffered severe penalties. The seeds they were offered were, in any case, seeds they didn't think they could use. They could't grind the grain in their stone grinding-mills in their homes; they said they didn't like the straw that grew underneath the grain (these were two-thirds subsistence farmers who were

eating ....

eating their own grain); and they had to have something their animals could eat, too; the varieties offered to them were not suitable; they didn't like the taste of the new wheat, and so on.

So they were not going to use very much of this, and the yields were not really that much better. It seemed to me that, nevertheless, they had looked around at these possibilities; that they were ready for technological improvements if somehow they could be made feasible and if they could get some of these improvements on a basis where they could trust the supplier and where he could give them necessary flexibility in selling the crop.

That was the situation, and the social organization of the village. I should say a little about it, because it was a very traditional village with 24 different castes among 850 people.

A couple of landlords had large shares in the village produce, of course, collecting taxes and putting a portion of that money in their pockets. But there was an elite then of about 25 per cent of the population that controlled all productive resources of the village. The remainder of the population was entirely dependent on those people for a living, and on each other.

The other people in the village of many other castes were then working as servants for the landowners, ritual servants of many kinds; about 15 different kinds of ritual services were provided in the village. The Hindu jajmani system, as it is called (by sociologists, at least) was certainly well exemplified in that village. All sorts of little things, little bits of perfume, little bits of massaging and dusting, and obeisances of various kinds; small gifts given to the servants, barbers, potters, and carpenters, and so on; several different kinds of religious mendicants, all of them trying to make a living off the farmer.

The farmer really didn't have a great deal of surplus, but they did divide it up according to traditional shares -- little bits of food going to each one of these servants. There was then a kind of patronage system which was under strain because the farmers didn't really have what it took to support all the other hungry people in the village, who were, traditionally, relatively hereditarily dependent on them. /

There ....

There was a rather tight factional situation in the village at the time, with a pair of opposite alliances, one led by the Brahmin group in the village. They had trouble uniting on any one candidate for election or any kind of issue -- they usually found themselves divided into groups of equal parties, really, but they did sometimes unite against the opposite faction, which was led by one of the resident village landlords, a Jat. He had a small group, but of his own caste, and his own caste was divided, but he had a large alliance among some of the low castes.

It was a shaky alliance, because then his resources were not sufficient to really support his followers very well. So there was a constant sort of fighting, there were a great many cases in the courts, a great many cases brought by one faction against the other. People were sometimes taking their sticks in their hands and yelling at each other, but everybody was spending a great deal of time in the courts, fighting over little bits of things like whose buffalo walked into whose field, and so on -- rather trivial, but making it very difficult for the village council to get anything done.

Of course, the council had very few powers then, though a panchayat/had been passed in U.P. In the old village council the Brahmins, with the majority of the power in the village with their land control, were effectively carrying on the village council's business by themselves and putting an official stamp on whatever they chose to do with the opposition of the other faction.

I might say a little about the religion of the village, too, and the other cultural features. Everything was oral then. There were very, very few literate people in the village -- a few up to the 5th standard, perhaps 20 people in the village had gone as far as the fifth grade out of 850, and there were no literate women in the village at the time. Stories were told on every festival -- there were old women telling stories -- they never had to look in a book to tell anybody a story, all in their heads. Only a couple of landlords had books, and they only had one or two sacred books in their houses.

The ....

The festivals were about 15, and most of them were very hard to connect with anything that you know in the way of famous Indian festivals. Take a day like Diwali, and you couldn't find in the village anything that really quite agreed with what the books say people are celebrating. Diwali has become a little tradition. In oral tradition they have their own stories and their four or five different characters in their stories that don't appear in any of the Hindu sacred books, but they were the reason for celebrating that festival, and the others were much like that.

The kind of stories people told were dependency stories very much, like being good and getting along well with the gods, being good to your relatives, and profiting with virtue accruing to you for doing so, or a woman worshipping her husband and bringing him back to life after death, and so on. And then there was one day in which everything was upset. All nice stories about how the castes behaved and women behaved and the lower people behaved generally to their masters were turned upside down at Holi, a spring festival, a very intense Saturnalia of about 5 days in which everybody did the opposite. The women beat the men and the low castes threw mud on the high castes and everybody got high on pot.

It was a nice kind of well-balanced social system, and it kind of delighted me as an anthropologist. But obviously, I am sure that Doug Ensminger coming here, or Ambassador Bowles coming here, would find a great deal of other things to say than, "This is a nice village." They might have said there was a great deal of room for improvement.

I might just say a little more about education. People tended to get pushed out of that village because there wasn't enough, and those who did get educated left the village. I found about 10 per cent of the population leaving the village, which may be some kind of assessment or evaluation of how things were in the village. In one generation 10 per cent of the people had emigrated from the village, and some of them were able to get an education to help them get along in the urban world, the outside world. Most

of them ....

of them hadn't been able to get an education to do so, but there was a notion that if you really didn't have any land you'd better get a little education instead and get out of the village so that you could keep on eating.

Well, I went away from this village for sixteen-and-a-half-years. I read the newspapers a little, and I had a few letters from the village in the meantime. I didn't know much about what was going on, but when I read the newspapers I only heard about problems. Things were terrible. Community projects were very slow in getting started and not adequate, personnel and supplies were very scarce, and, well, I didn't think that much would happen in this village of mine under those circumstances, because it was a sort of backwater on the edge of an administrative area and got very little attention from any officials. Very few of them ever got there, because it was always that six miles was just a little bit too far to come on a bicycle or walk unless the official stopped in roadside villages. So not much, I thought, would happen, and I noticed that the Intensive Agricultural Development Project that the Ford Foundation had initiated in Aligarh District around 1961-62 had been assessed as rather a bad job and hadn't turned out to be very rewarding, and it was pulled out after five years in the field so it looked like a pretty dismal area that I was going to find.

Well, let me tell you a little about the changes that occurred, in rapid sequence. There had been the Village Panchayat Act in 1951 which would set up the village council. Nobody wanted to run for village council while I was there, and the returning officer would come in and say, well, now, who do you want, and nobody would hold up his hand, and he would say how about who's got some land here, and he would ask some other questions, who were the elders, and he would write down some names and say, now you have to buy a one-rupee ticket in order to be a candidate for election, and nobody would want to pay the rupee. They were very reluctant to get into politics at all, and they thought it was some kind of a hoax, and they would balk, and they would sit around and say I have paid two rupees or one rupee and now what -- you see, this is all nonsense.

That . . .

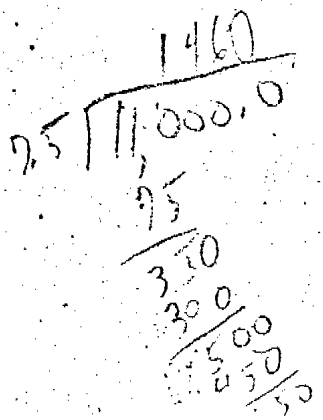
That was 1951-52, and then there was a zamindari abolition. I told you how the tenants did not want to have zamindari abolished; at least, they didn't want to have it abolished if they had to pay anything for it. The Government of U. P. was very interested in collecting that 10 times price for development-fund purposes. They were pledged to pay off the landlords. They hoped to get a good deal of return from this money, and the tenants were very reluctant, and it was producing a lot of strain between the officials and tenants in the effort.

In 1958, after I left the village, I learned by a letter from the village that the lands had been consolidated. There were about 150, I believe; it was small plots in the village at the time, and they were consolidated to something like half that number. That seemed interesting. I expected there would be a great deal of quarreling over that one, because hardly anybody's happy when he has to trade his land in for some other land.

In 1961, now, I'm telling you what I learned when I came back to the village, the first government tube-well was put in. It was bored successfully, a lot of water came out of it, and I think it was 1962 or, now, 1963, that the first power line came through that would allow power to other farmers who wanted to use it, perhaps, for tube-wells. Well, the first private tube-well was built in 1962 using the government tube-well line, and since then eight or ten private tube-wells have been built in the village between 1962 and 1968. Each one of these represent an investment of something like seven to eleven thousand rupees, with credit from the local land banks, I believe (I am not quite sure of details).

But in 1962 also another important event occurred. A farmer moved into the village who had never lived there before -- a relative by marriage to some people who had lived there before -- who bought about 10 acres of land in the village, and he was an ex-landlord himself from another part of the district, where he had a large landlord family backing him up.

He....



He had tried some improved seeds and some kinds of new fertilizer in 1961 in that village, and in 1962 he tried it in my village, and it was quite successful. The next year eight or ten other Brahmin farmers tried it, and they were successful. In 1963 everybody was falling over himself to get the new seeds and new fertilizers.

The demonstration of this by one villager who had taken the initiative was extremely convincing, and tube-wells were beginning to go up, so that there was water, and the new seeds and fertilizers could be handled about as fast as they could be obtained. So the tube-wells kept on building. Farmers say they can amortize the cost of one of these large tube-well investments, many of them, in as little as three years, so it is obviously a very profitable thing.

Their production has gone up -- I am not sure of the exact figure, I am going out in January to do a little more detailed survey on this -- but they say they are getting at least twice what they were getting before, and they are certainly getting more than twice the money they were getting before, because prices have been rising all along. The price is about three times. The prices were rising in the early years before all these new technological improvements came in. I am really talking about what happened in the last eight years -- that is, a sixteen-and-a-half-year gap in my knowledge of the village -- but in the early part of that 16-year period prices were rising.

The first thing the people did was build up five new temples in the village. These were not very big temples -- they cost less than half what a tube-well cost. This is the interesting kind of thing, they were being built on through this period, but some of them were started then. There hadn't been any temples in the village -- only one very unimportant little structure, but the five new ones went up and are very much used. But more about that later.

They .....

They would then buy some other things. They put a lot of money into new seeds right away, into fertilizers, into water, and into whatever it took to get the new crop started. There are a lot of new crops in the village. Barley has gone way down. Wheat has come up -- it was always coming up for the last 30 years, it came up in another spurt, but it was also accompanied by a lot of corn [maize], and this was a grain which was never used for human food in 1952, but it is now the principal grain in the village.

This interested me -- people were so fussy about exactly how the wheat tasted, and then they switched all the way over to corn. Most everybody eats corn every day. They found out it was cheaper -- that was the explanation they gave, and then they got used to it. They got a very good yield -- had some very good seeds. There was a lot of sugarcane -- there was practically none in 1952, and now they get a very good yield. A lot of cotton is being grown, a lot of sweet potatoes, and about 20 vegetable crops. They hardly had any vegetables at all in that village 16 years ago. People used the leaves of the mustard-oil plants, but they didn't grow the vegetables as such except potatoes and carrots, which they used for animal fodder. But now there are a lot of new vegetables in the village.

People are eating three times a day instead of two, and they are eating a rich diet. They are eating less ghee, but they are eating a lot more vegetables and a lot more grain than they were. It is apparent when you look at the landless laborers in the village, or anybody, but especially at the people who were trying to get laborer jobs and were generally succeeding only about half the year. A man could get about 150 days of work on the average in the village then. There was a lot of unemployment. Now the laborers are all employed and they are all eating as a result. They are employed all year and every day, because as soon as one crop comes out of the ground they switch the bullockpower around to plough right up and start sowing a new one.

So ....

So you don't see any empty fields. It always has standing crops. And it's always got people weeding those crops and watering those crops, and of course they are watering them a lot more than they were before. There is a great increase in the labor demand. Labor is being imported into the village. I met one farmer looking around the city trying to find somebody to bring back. He wanted to start a new tube-well and he wanted several laborers to work on all the water that was going to turn out and he couldn't find anybody in the village.

The village, then, has increased in population as you would expect in an intensive agricultural region that is producing a lot more. It now has about 40 per cent more people in it than it had 16 years ago. These are partly relatives, partly immigrants in various categories that came in. Children have grown up instead of dying; as you can see, the infant mortality is still extremely high, medical services have not changed, but people are moving in, and even unrelated people are also coming in to the village and they are finding work.

Animals have gone up in number. I haven't got the exact count, but the lanes are now, in some places, quite crowded with buffaloes giving that good rich milk, and they weren't there before, and especially in the poorer sections of the village you see quite a lot of them. A lot of people, a lot of farmers say they want to buy more buffaloes or other animals like that. They don't want to drink a lot of milk, because they are interested in saving up money so that they can add some more technological improvements to their land.

They are still thinking of new and better ways to do things. They haven't got so many new ideas in mind now as they had before, but a lot of people are talking about tractors and some are talking about getting machines that will do all kinds of fancy things like make ice-cream or something like that, you know. They have cotton gins right now. They have electric mills that grind all the grain in the village. Very little is ground in the household. It is only some special cooking items that are ground by the women in the homes.

Each ....

Each woman has about another one-and-three-quarter hours a day of time in which she can do something else. They don't have to get up so early, and there is even that electric threshing-machine which does a fair amount of grain, but nothing like most of the grain. The houses are very noticeably different. The clothing and all of those things are much improved. People are wearing sweaters in the winter; they didn't before, there was all cotton clothing. I think one or two landlords had woolen cloths, woolen jackets, and things like that, but now lots of people have woolen clothing -- scarves and sweaters and so on, and the houses are now about 40 -- new steel and brick and stone buildings in the village that there weren't before. Some of these are very beautiful houses, some of them are for living. Previously they were mostly for men's houses with a presentation sort of front, with people living somewhere else in a mud house behind.

Of course, I think mud houses are much better myself. They are cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter than brick houses are, but the villagers there parted company with me. They think brick houses are the thing.

This has meant a great deal of work for the carrying trade. The potters are doing extremely well. I thought they would be out and finished because of urban competition, cheaper prices in the bazaar, and so on. In fact, they are making a lot of pots, and they are more than everything else carrying those bricks and carrying those manures and fertilizers.

There is a lot more manure, natural manure, animal and farm-yard manure, and so on, for the fields, because there are more animals in the village at the same time, and the wood crops are even beginning to grow up. There are more trees than there were before.

In those houses you see all sorts of interesting things that weren't there before. Of them a little thing which interested me a lot is a tulsi tree, the religiously sacred sweet-basil tree

which ....

which stands for Vishnu in various forms; Krishna in this area especially. That has turned up in dozens and dozens of houses; there was only one there before. And you find that the houses have a lot more elegance about them.

All sorts of things that suggest a lot of civilizing going on. In the houses you also find hand-pumps. Eighty houses have hand-pumps. Nobody takes water out of a kaccha mud well any more, but most people were doing so in 1952. In fact, they often said they preferred mud wells. A great improvement in the protection from water-borne diseases is the result, it seems to me. (Can't prove this yet. It certainly looks a lot better than it did with those old wells. There is still some typhoid around, but there was quite a lot then.)

The social organization has taken some interesting turns. On those intercaste relations which were solidified by feasting -- large feasts given by these farmers at the time of their weddings or a death in the family -- there still do seem to be feasts, but they do seem to be smaller. Wedding parties, people say, are not so large, and they only stay one day or a day and a half, instead of three or four as they used to do. So there is less of that sort of thing, and perhaps less chance of the caste to express their rank order, which they do through feasting.

I am going to be looking into this some more, but it does look to me as if something is happening there, and I have seen some very strange groups of people eating together: Brahmins and non-Brahmins eating in the same line, sitting beside each other, which they would never have done before. In fact, I was called in and had a ceremonial dinner at a temple festival of all things, sitting next to the priest. This couldn't have happened before. And so on.

The village headman was a Jat. In fact, he was the man who came in who first tried the new seed. He is the new headman of the village -- the people elected him -- he is doing very well. He has a very nice new brick house which he has given me to live in.

He ....

He has completely, almost single-handedly, abolished the factions in the village, because he had so much largesse to give out -- the spoils of his profitable enterprises were such that he could put almost everybody in his pocket.

He got elected to the Panchayat and had a lot of land to sell out, because at one point the village common lands were turned over to the Panchayat and he gave them out to lots of people who then became members of his faction. He sold them to the low castes; to the Muslims, who make a nice alignment against the Brahmin faction, and at nice low rates -- the Brahmins objected that he gave them away and pocketed the money, or took a lot of money and pocketed it, or something like that.

In fact, he put in quite a few paved streets, and built a school (the roof is falling in, it is going to need some more attention), but he has pleased a lot of people and they are all kind of eating out of his hand. But not in any really dependent way -- he has just got a good political base there. And the other faction really does not exist. There are a few discontented people, but they are doing quite well with their grinding mills and machinery. It is just that they don't have the land base that he has for his power.

The village has become very politicized also. Everyone votes in the election. It is a great event. When you go to one of these village pradhan elections -- I did in the next village and they said it was just like that in my village -- you will find that it is a festival event. Women come out in large groups, and they sing songs about the election just as they do in the old-fashioned festival -- quite gala, and, so far as I have seen, these elections are quite peaceful also. They have a large amount at stake in one of these, because there is quite a lot of tax money if you can collect it. Of course, part of the staying power is not collecting taxes, so not all the taxes get collected, but there does seem to be something going on.

The ....

The main public debates are not whether the taxes should be collected or not, but it is a choice between school, improved roads in the village, or lighting for the village streets. Those are the hot issues which weren't even given priority to. There are obviously different people of different interests there.

There are these five new temples, I said, in the religious field. There are also about five new festivals in the village. You know, you might expect this to be rather different. You might expect that with secularization and urbanization and all these technological changes you would lose a lot of that old village culture, but five new festivals have started up and they are quite "village" in style. There are folk tales told about them, and women are still telling stories --- they have invented a lot of new stories since I was there -- and there is a lot more of that sort of thing, there is a lot more participation, as far as I can see -- more paintings are being made.

A great deal of the religion is women's religion in this area -- they do these paintings on the wall for each festival -- more women are doing it, and they are doing more elaborate ones, and I was looking at some of these paintings and I found that their content has changed quite a bit, too. There was one that was just about the god Narayan and how he gives food to the earth. It all comes through him. You worshiped him, and then the earth was fruitful. That one has now become a committee of six. There are six gods in the picture now; the other five have turned up. I asked whether they are probably six Narayans. The other five are the five Pandava Brothers, and this is very interesting if you know that in this region the Mahabharata, from which the Pandava story comes, was practically unknown. Almost all the stories in the village are from the Ramayana -- stories about Krishna, so this is something new, and obviously it has come out of the schoolbooks that there is really a loud voice about getting educated.

In ....

In fact, about 50 per cent are getting educated. Now this may sound pretty poor, but it is a great improvement from 5 per cent, and so all the boys and girls of the landed families -- which are quite a few, including some of the lowest caste -- are getting educated. Very few girls still are getting educated, but there are, I think, something like 25 boys going beyond the fifth grade now.

Quite a few are going to high school -- going about six miles, in all directions, to various high schools. There are about seven or eight in inter college, using the village as a dormitory, coming back every night. There is one in the university who commutes 14 miles a day. The village has become a kind of college dormitory for this new educated group.

And every landowning family now has one or two sons in high school, which has become an absolutely standard pattern; instead of a maximum of five years for anybody, there is now a new minimum of 50 per cent of the sons in high school, and they are managing to afford this. One, the eldest, always has to stay on the land because it is so extremely productive. So here we have prosperity working against education, but the brothers are supposed to work together, and they do, and complement each other, and there is a perfect willingness on the part of many of these boys to come back and spend time in the village and to use some of their sense on land.

I have seen high-school graduates, who are extremely bright and doing very well in their studies, say they really preferred not to take urban jobs. They preferred the life in the village. They thought it was much better, and they had a better chance of making a prosperous living there, too. Well, the village has a kind of pull, you might say. Previously it was a kind of place people worried about a lot. They were hungry in it, and then they left. Now it's the kind of a place where you think very hard before you leave it, because it's an interesting place.

There ....

There is a lot of expressive education in every sphere, a lot more literature. There are nine schoolteachers living in the village. These are all local boys. Previously there were none. Nine schoolteachers, and lots more would like to be schoolteachers. They're writing songs about sanitation for their classes, and they're also helping me very enthusiastically collect village folklore, because now they realize that there is a difference between standard language and village language.

They're interested in these village tales. They're old and have never been written down before. There are also new dramas, new poems. There is a lot more dramatic activity. It has altogether become a much more interesting place to be, and these people themselves are very self-conscious now. All the way through, I find that women know about the different dialects -- standard dialect, village dialect -- they know what a story is, they are willing to tell me stories when it was very, very difficult for me to do that 16 years ago.

There is a kind of awareness that there is something important in the village, and there is an awareness of how their customs are different from other people, and a kind of acceptance of urban standards as different from village standards, and a sense that the two ought to be related and are related. A lot of new things are coming in, and they're mostly from this kind of high level of civilization, but there is local creativity.

Let me conclude here by saying that though I thought very little would have happened -- perhaps very bad things would have happened -- to this village, being located where it was, very conservative people, proud people, in fact a great deal has happened, and a great deal has happened not directly, it seems, from the agencies that were most going to promote it, but by the initiative of the villagers themselves going out and getting these things.

They go to the seed store, they run after the VLW* and ask him what number seed has come in, and whether the fertilizers are available at this place or that, and are just constantly knocking at the doors of the block development offices trying to get things

for ....

*Village Level Worker

for themselves. There is a great deal of confidence about this. People used to come to me and ask me to get things for them. They used to say, "You are our mother and father, you help us;" now they are telling me what to do, really. They say, "Would you like to get electricity to your house? Well, come along, I know the man who can get it for you." And so they do.

In fact, there was one man selling bus tickets in the village on the U.P. Government Roadways. He has got more power than any gazetted officer in the village, because he has given these bus tickets to the people at the right times -- in the holiday rush, etc. They all immediately said to me, "You won't get an electric connection for 3 weeks", but he got it for me in six hours. He was amazed, too.

But, anyway, the villagers know how to get things they want. He is one of the "fixers" -- there are several others in the village. They are prosperous. They know so much about technology -- I just got a letter from my wife, who bought a little land just outside Chicago, and she was keeping horses on it. She said she was cleaning out the barn and burning the horse manure. When they heard that (I was translating my letter from home), they said, "Oh, no, that is a great mistake." I will write back to her, and they all want to know how many horsepower tractors, etc., and she is sending out a catalog for them.

A lot of this does seem to happen on its own power, and it is a kind of elite management in the village. The old society seems to have stepped up pretty much on the initiative of its own leadership, with a couple of new ideas here and there, but mostly a demonstration that it can work, and people take over from there. And that is my story.

(This is the transcript of an extemporaneous talk.)

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